

# **Colon and Rectum Cancer Facts & Figures 2001**

North Dakota





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# **ACS 2015 Challenges**

The American Cancer Society has set ambitious challenge goals for the year 2015:

- To reduce the rate of cancer deaths by 50 percent.
- To reduce the rate of cancer cases by 25 percent.
- To improve the quality of life for all cancer survivors.

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# Introduction

The American Cancer Society, Rocky Mountain Division, presents *Colon and Rectum Cancer Facts and Figures 2001*, to assist American Cancer Society volunteers and staff, local community groups, and health professionals in providing programs and services to the public, cancer patients, and their families.

Cancer is a major public health problem in North Dakota. This publication provides benchmarks to measure progress towards the Society's challenge goals for major reductions in cancer deaths and incidence and improvement in quality of life for cancer survivors. Colorectal cancer is preventable if detected early, and North Dakota has made progress in early detection and prevention of colorectal cancer.

For more information you can trust about cancer, contact your American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345, or visit our website at www.cancer.org.

# What Is Colon and Rectum Cancer?

Most cancers are named after the part of the body where the cancer originates. The colon is part of the digestive tract, where food is processed to create energy. The colon has four sections: the ascending colon, the transverse colon, the descending colon, and the sigmoid colon. Colon cancer can start in any of these four sections, or where the colon ends in the rectum. Because the colon and rectum tissues are so closely related, colon and rectum cancers will hereafter be referred to as colorectal cancers.

Over 95 percent of colorectal cancers are adenocarcinomas. These are cancers of the cells that line the inside of the colon and rectum. Before a cancer develops, there are often earlier changes in the lining of the colon or rectum. One type of change is a growth of a tissue called a polyp. Removing a polyp, which can be done during a screening procedure, may prevent it from becoming cancerous.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in North Dakota, yet colorectal cancer has remained a little-discussed disease. Recent reports of notable public figures being treated for colorectal cancer have provoked discussion about this cancer, and may help the public to understand its threat. The more people talk about it, the more likely they are to seek information about early detection and to adopt behaviors that reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.



# **Colon and Rectum Cancer**

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer among men and women in North Dakota, and it is the second most common cause of cancer-related death in North Dakota, eclipsed only by lung cancer. In the U.S., incidence rates for both invasive and in situ (early stage tumors that have not extended through the first layer of cells) colorectal cancer have declined steadily since 1990, as indicated in the graph below. The apparent increase in colorectal cancer incidence in North Dakota in the late 1990's may be due to the increased use of screenings, such as blood stool tests, sigmoidoscopies, and colonoscopies. Due to the recent establishment of a statewide cancer registry in 1997, North Dakota does not have data available for prior years.

In the U.S., death from colorectal cancer has declined steadily among women since about 1950, and among men since around 1985. The reasons for these decreases are not well understood. Increased polyp removal, advances in treatment protocols (such as increased use of new surgical techniques and adjuvant therapies), and other behaviors, including changes in dietary practices, daily use of aspirin or estrogen replacement therapy, may be contributing factors.

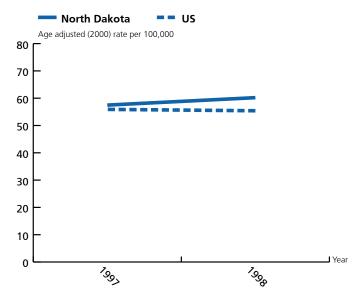
### Risk

The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. The rate of colorectal cancer is six times higher among persons 65 years of age and older than among persons aged 40-64 years. Almost 75 percent of newly diagnosed colorectal cancers occur in persons aged 65 and older, but this disease can occur at much younger ages as well. Men are more likely to develop colorectal cancer than women.

Other risk factors include a personal history of intestinal adenomatous polyps or inflammatory bowel disease. Familial risk factors include inherited familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) and hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer (HNPCC), which result in an increased risk due to alterations of cancer susceptibility genes. Smoking, physical inactivity and diets high in fat/low in fiber may also increase risk.

Some behaviors may reduce the risk of developing colorectal cancer, such as a diet high in fruits and vegetables, physical activity, hormone replacement therapy in postmenopausal women, and aspirin use.

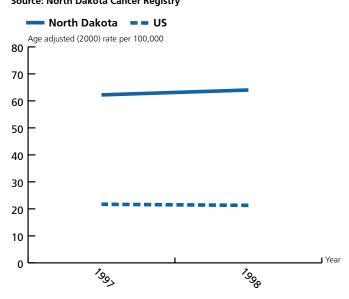
# Rates of New Cases\* of Colon and Rectum Cancer, North Dakota and U.S., 1997-1998 Source: North Dakota Cancer Registry



<sup>\*</sup>Invasive cases only.

1-800-ACS-2345

# Colon and Rectum Cancer Death Rates, North Dakota and the U.S., 1997-1998 Source: North Dakota Cancer Registry





# **Stage of Diagnosis and Survival**

Staging is the process of describing the extent of the disease or the spread of the cancer from the site of origin. Staging is essential in determining the choice of therapy and assessing prognosis. A cancer's stage is based on information about the primary tumor's size and location in the body and whether or not it has spread to other areas of the body.

If cancer cells are present only in the layer of cells where they originally developed and have not spread to any other parts of that organ or elsewhere in the body, then the cancer is *in situ*. If cancer cells have spread beyond the original layer of tissue, then the cancer is considered to be invasive.

Five-year relative survival rates are commonly used to monitor the progress in early detection and treatment of cancer. Generally, survival has an inverse relationship with the stage of colorectal cancer at the time of detection-the more advanced the stage, the lower the survival rate. Due to the recent establishment of a statewide cancer registry in 1997, North Dakota does not have data available for five-year survival rates.

Nationally, when colorectal cancer is diagnosed at an early, localized stage, the five-year survival rate is 90 percent. Unfortunately, only 37 percent of cases are diagnosed at the local stage¹. Declines in the proportion of colorectal cancers diagnosed in late stages may reflect an increase in screening practices. The American Cancer Society recommends that both men and women begin routine colorectal cancer screening at age 50. For more information about the colorectal screening recommendations and screening utilization rates, see page 6.

The same methods used to screen for colorectal cancers can also be used to remove polyps (adenomas), preventing the growths from becoming cancerous in many cases.

'Smith, R., von Eschback, A., Wender, R., Levin, B., Byers, T., Rothenberger, D., Brooks, D., Creasman, W., Cohen, C., Runowicz, C., et al. American Cancer Society Guidelines for the Early Detection of Cancer: Update of Early Detection Guidelines for Colorectal Cancer. CA 2000; 51 (1):44-54.

# **Public Policy**

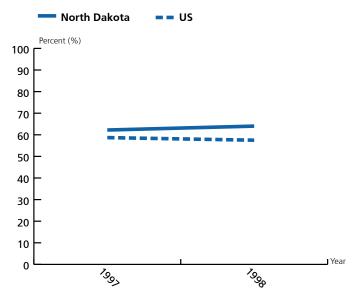
The American Cancer Society is taking the lead to address barriers to colorectal cancer screening for patients at average risk.

North Dakota law does not mandate health plans to cover colorectal cancer screening, nor does North Dakota have a law to mandate health plans to cover routine costs associated with participation in clinical trials. The American Cancer Society is working in the public policy arena to address these barriers to access.

To learn more about ACS legislative priorities, please call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit us online at www.cancer.org.

# Percent of Colon and Rectum Cancers Diagnosed at Late Stage\*, North Dakota, 1997-1998

Source: North Dakota Cancer Registry



\*Late Stage defined as regional and distant, as a percent of all invasive colon & rectum cancer diagnoses, excluding unknowns (SEER summary stage definitions, see page 11).



# Local New Cases, Deaths, and Late Stage Diagnoses

The following table displays 1997-1998 average, annual incidence rates (number of new cases), mortality rates (number of deaths), and percent of cases diagnosed as late stage\*\* for North Dakota Health Service Areas. See page 9 for more information about the Health Service Areas.

Incidence rates describe the number of new cases of colon and rectum cancer that occur within a defined population and are commonly expressed per standard unit of population. In this instance the rates are expressed per 100,000 persons per year. They are used for comparisons between states, counties, or other aggregates. Mortality rates describe the number of colon and rectum cancer deaths that occur within a defined population at risk of dying during a specified time period. Incidence rates in this document refer specifically to invasive cancers. The percent of cases diagnosed at late stage is important, as these individuals are beginning treatment when the cancer is more developed and more difficult to treat. The percent of cases diagnosed at a late stage directly corresponds to the level of screening behavior in the general public.

# Colon and Rectum Cancer Incidence and Death Rates\*, and Percent Late Stage\*\* Diagnosis by H.S.A.\*\*\* and County, North Dakota, 1995-1999

Source: North Dakota Cancer Registry, North Dakota Office of Vital Records & Statistics

H.S.A.	Inc. rate	Mort. rate	% late stage	6	71.14	19.59	59.0%
1	41.27	31.46	70.3%	Barnes	51.17	19.21	66.6%
Divide	٨	٨	75.0%	Dickey	65.71	٨	20.0%
McKenzie	33.62	٨	81.2%	Foster	60.93	٨	71.4%
Williams	70.5	34.81	42.8%	Griggs	71.53	٨	62.5%
2	52.71	22.9	68.3%	LaMoure	72.28	٨	55.5%
Burke	٨	٨	75.0%	Logan	62.16	٨	100.0%
Bottineau	65.75	22.37	54.5%	McIntosh	60.37	27.44	75.0%
McHenry	44.9	٨	75.0%	Stutsman	93.59	25.72	60.0%
Mountrail	48.96	٨	75.0%	Wells	68.36	٨	46.1%
Pierce	44.17	26.76	71.4%	7	66.61	16.56	55.5%
Renville	49.97	۸	75.0%	Burleigh	64.49	18.83	50.7%
Ward	55.92	28.12	67.7%	Emmons	54.38	٨	100.0%
3	59.66	22.28	61.2%	Grant	٨	٨	25.0%
Benson	75.76	۸	45.4%	Kidder	51.12	٨	50.0%
Cavalier	41.12	٨	100.0%	McLean	68.12	21.33	61.1%
Eddy	65.1	۸	57.1%	Mercer	79.8	٨	69.2%
Ramsey	40.89	15.03	71.4%	Morton	71.25	17.92	54.0%
Rolette	96.09	41.82	55.0%	Oliver	188.15	٨	37.5%
Towner	38.01	۸	60.0%	Sheridan	٨	٨	66.6%
4	52.54	24.21	76.1%	Sioux	٨	٨	100.0%
Grand Forks	58.59	29.03	75.0%	8	68.97	25.68	67.7%
Nelson	74.25	۸	55.5%	Adams	٨	٨	100.0%
Pembina	50.09	^	91.6%	Billings	٨	٨	0.0%
Walsh	29.12	24.23	81.8%	Bowman	56.63	٨	83.3%
5	54.05	22.51	61.2%	Dunn	٨	90.03	66.6%
Cass	54.64	21.53	58.0%	Golden Valley	٨	٨	33.3%
Ransom	77.36	32.68	73.3%	Hettinger	94.38	٨	100.0%
Richland	69.75	19.92	66.6%	Slope	٨	٨	0.0%
Sargent	43.23	48.89	50.0%	Stark	82.94	20.09	58.9%
Steele	٨	٨	0.0%				
Traill	32.16	٨	66.6%	^ Statistic could not	be calculated d	ue to less than 5 cases.	

<sup>\*</sup>Rates per 100,000 age adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Late stage defined as regional and distant, as a percent of all invasive colon & rectum cancer diagnoses, excluding unknowns (SEER summary stage definitions, see p. 11).

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>H.S.A. is a defined region where most of its residents are likely to seek care than to travel outside of it.



# **Guidelines for Prevention and Early Detection of Colon and Rectum Cancer**

# **Health Promotion Guidelines**

- 1. Stay within healthy weight range.
- **2.** Be physically active—at least moderately active for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week.
- **3.** Eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and eat foods from other plant sources, such as breads, cereals, grain products, rice, pasta, or beans several times a day.
- **4.** Limit your intake of high-fat foods, particularly from animal sources.
- **5.** Limit consumption of alcoholic beverages, if you drink at all

### 6. Don't smoke!

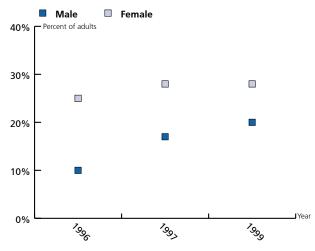
# American Cancer Society Guidelines for the Cancer-Related Checkup

A cancer-related checkup is recommended every three years for people ages 20 to 40 years old and every year for people ages 40 and older. This exam should include health counseling and, depending on a person's age, might include examinations for cancers of the thyroid, oral cavity, skin, lymph nodes, testes, and ovaries as well as for some non-malignant diseases. Special tests for colorectal cancer are recommended as outlined below. Persons with family or personal histories of cancer should discuss appropriate screening guidelines with their physicians.

# American Cancer Society Screening Guidelines For Adults 50 or Older at Average Risk

<b>Test or Procedure</b>	Frequency
Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)	Every year
and	
Flexible Sigmoidoscopy	Every 5 years
-OR-	
Double Contrast Barium	Every 5 years
Enema	
-OR-	
Colonoscopy	Every 10 years

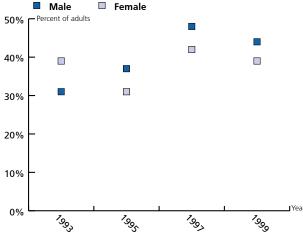
Percent of Adults 50 and Over Who Had a Screening Blood Stool Test Within the Past 2 Years, by Gender, North Dakota, 1996-1999\* Source: North Dakota BRFSS



\*Data are unavailable for '98.

Percent of Adults 50 and Over Who Ever Had a Screening Sigmoidoscopy or Colonoscopy, by Gender. North Dakota. 1993-1999\*

Source: North Dakota BRFSS



\*Data are unavailable for '94, '96, '98.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Note in 1993 and in 1995, data reflects have you ever had a proctoscopic exam.



# Lifestyles

Being overweight or obese can increase the risk of cancer of the colon (less so for rectal cancer). Risk increases progressively with increasing body fat. Those who are obese are at about twice the risk for colorectal cancer than those who have normal weight. The reasons for this association between body weight and colorectal cancer are not fully understood, but they may be related to the same adverse metabolic effects of obesity that also increase the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

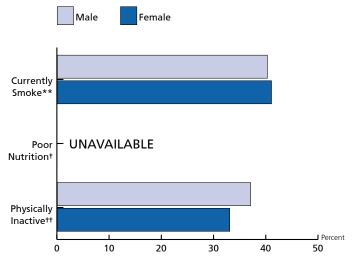
Physical activity may reduce colon cancer risk (less so for rectal cancer). The benefits of physical activity are not limited only to weight control and improved overall health. The relationship between increased physical activity may be related to improved bowel function and to the beneficial effects of physical activity on metabolism.

Food choices can affect colorectal cancer risk. Studies have shown that those who eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in their diet are at reduced risk, while those who eat more red meat and high fat foods are at increased risk.

Cigarette smoking could increase the risk of colorectal cancer, whereas the use of estrogen replacement therapy after menopause, or the use of non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs could reduce risk. Avoiding smoking is a sound idea for many reasons, of course, but the decision to take estrogen or aspirin-like medications is complex because these types of medications present risks as well as possible benefits.

In summary, one's risk of getting colorectal cancer can be reduced by weight control, regular physical activity, and by choosing a diet high in fruits and vegetables but low in red meats and fats. Even though all these lifestyle factors can reduce an individual's risk of getting colorectal cancer, it is still important for everyone to be screened for colorectal cancer following ACS guidelines. *The identification and removal of colorectal polyps is the single most effective strategy to prevent colorectal cancer.* 

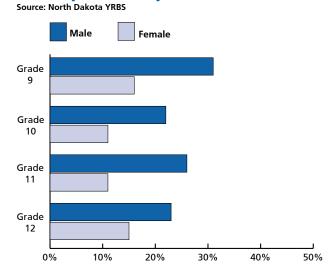
Youth Risk Behaviors, by Gender, in North Dakota, 1999
Source: North Dakota YRBS



<sup>\*\*</sup>Current smokers are defined as people who smoked cigarettes at least once in the last 30 days.

Youth are defined as high school students.

# Percent of High School Students Who Are at Risk for Overweight\* or Are Overweight\*\* in North Dakota by Grade and by Sex, 1999



<sup>\*</sup>At Risk for Overweight = calculated body mass index (BMI) higher than the 85th percentile, but below the 95th percentile.

Youth with poor nutrition are defined as people who did not eat the recommended 5 fruits and vegetables a day.

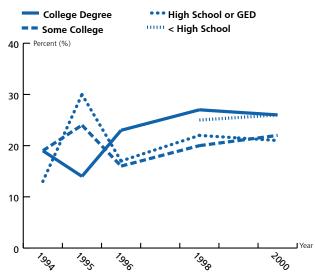
th Physically inactive youth are defined as people who did not exercise vigorously (activity for at least 20 min. that made you sweat and breathe hard) 3 or more days during the last 7.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Overweight = calculated body mass index (BMI) higher than the 95th percentile.



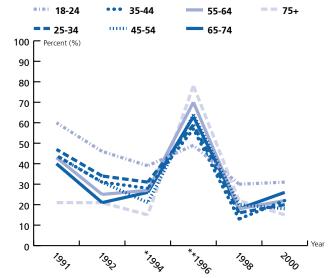
# **Lifestyles**

Percent of Adults (18+) Who Eat 5 or More Servings of Fruits and Vegetables per Day, by Education, North Dakota, 1994-2000\* Source: North Dakota BRFSS



<sup>\*</sup>Data are unavailable for '97, and '99.

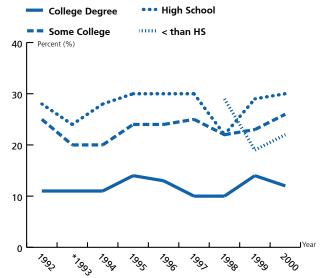
# Percent of Adults (18+) Who Engage in Physical Activity,\* by Age, North Dakota, 1991-2000\*\* Source: North Dakota BRFSS



<sup>\*</sup>Physical activity is defined as regular and sustained physical activity (30min/day, 5+

# Percent of Adults (18+) Who Are Current Smokers,\* by Education, North Dakota, 1992-2000

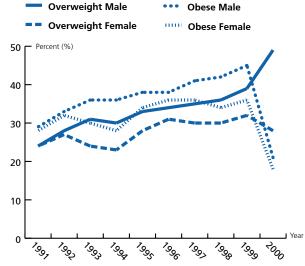
Source: North Dakota BRFSS



<sup>\*</sup>Current smokers are defined as people who ever smoked 100 cigarettes and who now report smoking every day or some days.
\*\*1993 and earlier includes regular and irregular smokers.

# Percent of Adults (18+) Who Are Overweight\* or Obese\*\*, by Gender, North Dakota, 1991-2000

Source: North Dakota BRFSS



days/week), regardless of intensity.
\*\*Data are unavailable for '93, '95, '97, '99.

<sup>\*</sup>Based on body mass index 25-29.9  $\text{Kg/m}^2$ .

\*\*Based on body mass index  $\geq$ 30. For 1999 and earlier, overweight was classifed as body mass index >27.3 for women and >27.8 for men. Obese was classified as >120% of ideal



# **Demographics**

# **North Dakota Counties**

Health Service Regions are an aggregation of counties and independent cities based on cluster analysis of where Medicare patients obtained routine hospital services in 1998. A Health Service Region is further defined as a region within which its residents are more likely to seek hospital care than to travel outside of it. Health Service Regions are used when county data is too sparse to calculate accurate rates. North Dakota has 53 counties that are joined into eight Health Service Regions.



Region 2: Burke, Bottineau, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, Ward

Region 3: Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Ramsey, Rolette, Towner

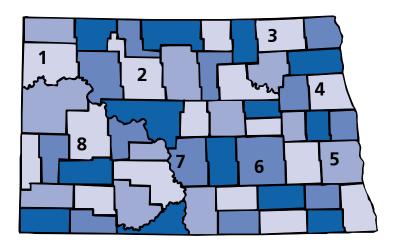
Region 4: Grand Forks, Nelson, Pembina, Walsh

Region 5: Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, Traill

Region 6: Barnes, Dickey, Foster, Griggs, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Stutsman, Wells

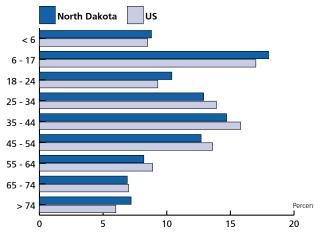
Region 7: Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan, Sioux

Region 8: Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope, Stark

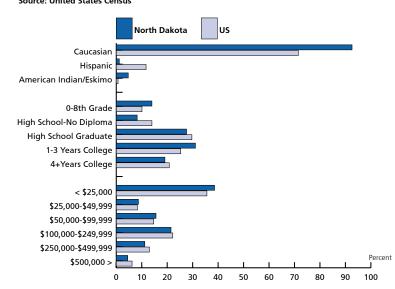


# Total Population by Age, North Dakota and United States, 2000

Source: United States Census



Total Population by Race/Ethnicity, Education Level, and Household Income, North Dakota and United States, 2000 Source: United States Census





# **Underserved Populations**

Despite recent progress in the fight against cancer, many Americans continue to suffer an unequal burden of cancer. Underserved populations, as a result of being uninsured or underinsured, or unaware of available screening and treatment resources, have inadequate access to high quality cancer prevention, screening, treatment, and rehabilitation. These Americans include many racial and cultural groups who share certain characteristics, such as low levels of income and education, or who live in geographically isolated areas. Other individuals experience barriers to health care because of illiteracy, or differing cultural beliefs, practices, and languages.

## Poverty<sup>1</sup>

Poverty is a reality for 32 million Americans and is a major factor associated with an increased risk of developing and dying from cancer. Poverty is also associated with higher rates of unemployment, lower education levels, inadequate living conditions, poor nutrition, and decreased access to quality health care.

Fourteen percent of North Dakota residents are below 100 percent of poverty level, compared with the national average of 13 percent.

Median household income in North Dakota in 1997-1998 averaged \$31,764, which is below the national average of \$37,005.

### Race and Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>

In North Dakota, 7.3 percent of the population are minorities, in contrast to the United States as a whole, in which minorities comprise 28.7 percent of the total population.

# Health Care Access<sup>1</sup>

Twenty-five percent of North Dakota citizens do not have access to primary care providers. Eighty-three percent of counties in North Dakota have been designated as medically underserved areas. Additionally, 94.3 percent of North Dakota counties have been identified as having a health professional shortage.

### Health Insurance<sup>1</sup>

There are also a number of residents that do not have health insurance. In 1999, 14.2 percent of North Dakota residents did not have health insurance, which is less than the national average of 16.3 percent.

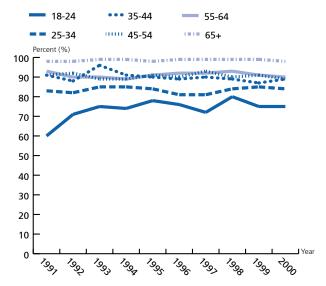
# **Addressing Cancer in the Underserved**

The American Cancer Society has engaged in a full-scale initiative to eliminate health disparities among racial and ethnic minorities and other underserved groups to improve health status and reduce numbers of new cancer cases and deaths.

The American Cancer Society is working diligently to understand the needs of underserved populations by conducting community assessments, sponsoring research, and funding demonstration projects. The ACS is taking action by conducting health education and outreach, and advocating for changes in coverage for screening and treatment, as well as changes in public policy at all levels of government responsible for addressing the inequalities in health care delivery and financing. The American Cancer Society is committed to providing local leadership in cancer prevention and control to break down the barriers to access and optimum health care.

# Percent of Adults (18+) with Health Care Coverage, by Age, 1991-2000

Source: North Dakota BRFSS



Data source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration, HRSA State Health and Workplace Profiles, Fiscal Year 1999.



# **Data Sources**

Cancer incidence and mortality data are based on cases reported to each state's central cancer registry (CCR) and the underlying cause of death reported by each state's Office of Vital Statistics. U.S. mortality rates are from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. CCRs are legally mandated, statewide, population-based cancer information centers. Analyses were performed by the registries. All rates are age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population. More detailed information on the status of cancer in each state is available from the state's CCR.

Survival trends for adults, children, and U.S. incidence rates are from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program. More detailed information can be found in (SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1973-1997,) available from SEER and on its website at www-seer.ims.nci.nih.gov. Survival rates are from cancer incidence data collected on about 10 percent of the U.S. population.

Risk factor data have been drawn from each state's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), both of which are conducted as collaborations between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state departments of health or education.

# **Definitions and Abbreviations**

**SEER summary stage definitions**- Stage of disease information is obtained from extent of disease information. The historical stage presented has four levels. An invasive neoplasm confined entirely to the organ of origin is said to be **localized**. An invasive neoplasm that has extended beyond the limits of the organ of origin is said to be **regional**. An invasive neoplasm that has spread to parts of the body remote from the primary tumor either by direct extension or by discontinuous metastasis is said to be **distant**. In addition, when information is not sufficient to assign a stage, an invasive neoplasm is said to be **unstaged**.

**Unavailable data-** For states that did not have overall response rates of 40 percent or more on youth risk behavior surveys, the data are not eligible for publication in the MMWR (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report), and, as such, are unavailable.

Relative Survival Rate: The relative survival rate is the survival rate observed for a group of cancer patients compared to the survival rate of persons in the general population who are similar to the patient group with respect to age, gender, race, and calendar year of observation. Relative survival adjusts for normal life expectancy (factors such as dying from accidents or other diseases). Five-year relative survival rates include persons who are still living five years after diagnosis, whether in treatment, remission, or disease-free.

ACS American Cancer Society

BMI Body Mass Index, Weight in Kg/Height in m<sup>2</sup>
BRFSS Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

CCR Central Cancer Registry

**CDC** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

C&R Colon and Rectum

MMWR Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

NCI National Cancer Institute
RMD Rocky Mountain Division

SEER NCI Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results

Program

YRBS Youth Risk Behavior Survey

# **Agencies Contributing Data**

North Dakota Cancer Registry North Dakota Department of Health 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301 Bismarck, ND 58505-0200 701-328-2333

### **BRFSS**

North Dakota Department of Health 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301 Bismarck, ND 58505-0200 701-328-2378

### YRBS

North Dakota Department of Health 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301 Bismarck, ND 58505-0200 701-328-3138

### **Acknowledgements**

The data for portions of this report have been provided through the cooperation of local agencies, all of which are listed on this page. These agencies are the primary contributors of cancer-related data specific to North Dakota, and this publication would not have been possible without their assistance. This publication is designed to provide an overview in North Dakota and in no way replaces the relevance or need for reports of the individual organizations.

Report compiled and produced for the American Cancer Society's Rocky Mountain Division, by the following staff: Alacey Berumen, MNM Regional Planner, Robert Grosboll, MPH Cancer Specialist, Joe McManis, Communications Coordinator, Lisa Emery MSPH.

# North Dakota Offices and Units

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIVISION Minot

2255 S. Oneida St. Denver, CO 80224 303-758-2030

### NORTH DAKOTA

Fargo P.O. Box 2309 Fargo, ND 58108-2309 701-232-1385

600 22nd Avenue NW Minot, ND 58701 701-838-5550

### Bismarck

523 E. Bismarck Expressway, #20 Bismarck, ND 58504 701-224-9954

# **American Cancer Society Mission:**

The American Cancer Society is the nationwide, community-based, voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives from cancer, and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy, and service.



Cancer Information: 800-ACS-2345 www.cancer.org